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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Office of Marketing Services
Marketing Reports Division
821 Market Street, Room 700
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Western Region

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM MARKET NEWS REVIEWS
Week ending January 19, 1945

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FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Indications from crop surveys are that supplies of fresh vegetables may be slightly smaller, during the next couple of months than last year, but still above pre-war supplies for the same period. Fruit supplies may also be smaller except for citrus and apples, which are up.

Apples - Carlot movement for the past week was 1,145 cars, bringing the season's total to 37,588 cars, almost 60 percent above the total for last year at the same date. While supplies continue ample, and on some markets heavy, they are lower than last week and prices for all grades and sizes are moving up to the ceiling.

WFO 121, issued by WFA, effective January 16, requires handlers of fresh apples grown and located in Washington and Oregon to set aside their holdings of Winesap, Delicious (except Golden Delicious) and Newtwns, to meet military and war service requirements, and restricts sale, shipment or delivery of three varieties of apples by any person except to governmental agencies, and requires that all apples sold to these agencies be graded and packed in an acceptable manner. Quantities not needed to fill war requirements will be released to civilian trade.

Potatoes - Supplies continue to drop, and dealers and users are reaching into ordinarily out-of-the-way places to replenish their stocks. Prices are all at ceiling. Areas ordinarily supplying seed stock have located small supplies suitable for table use, which are being moved to the vegetable markets. Some small amounts of early stock are reaching the markets, --- these are earlier than usual and the movement is influenced by the strong demand and ceiling prices, with less attention to quality.

Carlot shipments past week, Idaho 966 cars, U.S. 4,795 cars. Season to date, Idaho 24,048 cars, U.S. 186,104 cars, last season to same date, 23,349 cars for Idaho and 200,021 cars for the U.S.

An ICC order effective 12:01 January 22nd provides priority for shipping potatoes from 20 potato producing states including Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and California. Order of priorities: (1) shipments to armed forces, (2) to dehydrators and processors under government contract, (3) certified, war approved and selected seed to be shipped direct to Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri (Kansas City and South) and Long Island (Nassau and Suffolk Counties only). Any cars remaining after the priorities are met may be supplied to trade channels for table stock.

Lettuce - Prices were slightly down at the close of the week as supplies were heavy in most of the western markets. California and Arizona stock, dry pack, 4 dozen per crate, was mostly quoted at \$1.75 to \$2.25 on the southwestern wholesale markets, and up to \$3.35 per crate in the Northwest.

Carlot shipments from the Western Region totaled at the close of the week 1,463 cars, bringing this season's total to 3,932 cars, and for the U.S. season's total 18,633 cars, compared with 16,709 cars last year to the same date.

DAIRY AND POULTRY

Butter - Demand continues to be in excess of supplies, although milk production is gaining throughout the nation and is averaging above that of last year. Butter production is also gaining, but is below last year's output at this same time. Present indications point to heavier milk and butter production for the first part of 1945 than the first part of 1944. However, because of increased military demands, civilian supplies may be slightly lower.

Eggs - Demand has apparently moved up as ceiling prices were pulled down during the last few days. Supplies, however, have not kept pace. Production has not stepped up as anticipated and lags below that of last year at this time.

Poultry - Ceiling prices failed to attract sufficient supplies on the western markets to satisfy demand for dressed stock, and supplies were early reported cleared throughout the week. Dressing plants received insufficient supplies to maintain operations.

LIVESTOCK AND MEATS

Cattle - Cattle on feed in the Western Region January 1, 1945, is estimated at 374,000 head, slightly below the 376,000 on feed a year earlier. This compares with a 401,400 head average over the five years 1939 to 1943 inclusive.

Slaughter figures furnished by the BAE for California appear interesting, especially since California is a meat importing state, and its population has increased heavily in the last two years. Slaughter of cattle in November of 1944 showed an increase of 28.4 percent above that for November of 1943. For the first eleven months of 1944 the total number slaughtered was 18 percent above the average for 1939 to 1943 on a twelve months basis.

Receipts on the four western markets the past week totaled 23,749 head, 17.8 percent above the previous week. On the twelve principal markets receipts were 232,500 head, 6 percent under the final total for the previous week. Prices fluctuated during the week, but closed the week slightly less than at the close of the previous week, \$14.75 to \$16.50 being top.

Hogs - Prices were maintained at ceiling and demand was strong. Receipts on the four western markets were 13,952 head, compared with 16,975 the previous week, and 28,815 the corresponding week last year. On the twelve principal markets, receipts were down 19 percent from the previous week to 324,000 head.

Sheep - Receipts on the twelve principal markets for the past week were an estimated 270,000 head, down 5 percent from the previous week. On the four western markets, receipts were 16,363 head, 95 percent of receipts for the previous week. Top prices at the close of the week were \$15.25 to \$16.00.

GRAIN PRODUCTS

Wheat - A combination of many factors held down grain movement and sales over the past week, but one of importance and close at home was the lack of railroad equipment to move stocks, another being favorable outlook for good 1945 crops. Prices on the West coast held at about the same level as at the close of the previous week, being at or near ceiling.